



## SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 4, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

### Community Representatives:

**Tom Lamar**, Chair  
Katie Pierce, Vice Chair  
**Ted Lester**, Secretary  
**Ken Carlson**  
**Gregory Ely**  
**Ted Feldman**  
**Alex Frieden**

**Kevin McGrath**  
**Alan Moore**  
Mark Vollinger  
**Lena Webb**  
**Ian Woloschin**

### Ex Officio:

**Katjana Ballantyne**, City Council  
Steve Carrabino, Police Dept  
**Adam Polinski**, OSPCD Mobility

### Guests:

Viola Augustin  
Karl Alexander  
Nate Kaufman  
Chris Dwan  
Zach Rosenberg  
Steve Mackay  
Arah Schur  
Alex Epstein  
Emily Balkam  
Jeremy Mendelson  
George Schneelock

Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 6:30-8:00PM

GoToMeeting link for computers, tablets, and smartphones: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/197120373>

GoToMeeting dial-in number: +1 (646) 749-3122, Access Code: 197-120-373

### Procedural, General Business & Updates

- Guest introductions and meeting logistics
- Acting Secretary: Ken
- Approval of January minutes- Unanimously approved
- Update on Safe Streets Alliance- Ken gave a brief update on Somerville Alliance for Safe Streets. The Declaration and Call to Action has garnered over 130 signatures to date and nearly 100 people have indicated they will attend the Summit on Feb 28. Many more signatories and summit attendees are expected. To sign on to the Declaration and/or to attend the summit see this [LINK](#). There is a lot of work going on to meet with City officials and City Councilors to educate them about SASS and the goals of the Summit.

### Focus 1: Shared Streets Review

- Interview by Neighborways Design team
  - City hired Neighborways Design
  - Karl Alexander- Project Planner for Neighborways
  - Feedback on 2020 Neighborways
    - Gathering feedback from SBAC on advancement of traffic calming
    - Positive and Constructive comments
    - Examples: More durable physical infrastructure to slow traffic, speed humps, more clear signage to warn drivers to drive slowly, that children are at play, need for enforcement (although problematic since can't enforce an advisory 10 mph speed limit); children seemed to enjoy calmed streets

### Focus 2: 2021 Priorities and Logistics

- Results of Priorities & Logistics survey - Tom

- Bike Network Plan and Spring Hill esp. Highland Ave were highest priorities
- Community Path, North-South links, Elm St, In person education and encouragement events when we can, better engage business owners
- More collaboration from departments other than OSPCD (DPW, T&P), process suggestions about meeting length, better leverage sub- committee meetings, maintain remote options for meetings once back in person

***Focus 3: Spring Hill / Highland Ave***

- Update on Highland Ave / Spring Hill designs and schedule – Viola
  - The City got a lot of feedback about the need for bike lanes on Highland Ave
  - The Mayor directed OSPCD to look at the feasibility of bike lanes
  - The City is going forward with current design (no bike lanes) for Highland since the design needs to be completed in the next month
  - The City is evaluating various future options with parking on one side vs. no removal of parking overall for installation of potential future bike lanes
  - Designs prepared and are being reviewed by City’s consultant
  - Designs will be shared with all committees on Feb 23 and open for feedback until March 12
  - Public meeting TBD in March timeframe
  - Late summer/early to start construction for Project Area One and continue to early 2024
  - It was asked how is this different than what was presented in December? Then bike lanes were not being considered and currently no bike lanes are included. The City says changes are being implemented with curbs and intersections to not preclude addition of future bike lanes, so that bike lanes could be added in more of a quick build approach
  - The city says that it is committed to having future bike infrastructure on Highland. But the City is not in a position to have the public process needed to remove considerable parking.
  - Members of the Bike Committee were not at all happy with the City going forward with a design without bike lanes included
- Steve Mackey, president of the Somerville Chamber of Commerce commented that business owners should be included in the conversations and decision making, and that the City needs to understand that many business owners cannot make public meetings in the evening so other meeting accommodations need to be made to be inclusive
- Mark Chase presented on low stress bicycle networks along Highland Ave corridor and north-south connecting routes
  - Presented Neighborway networks between Union Sq and Davis Sq
  - Steep hill issue along Spring Hill for North-South bicycle routes
  - Rangeways- Old term for the North South Streets in Somerville that go long distances North to South: Central St, Cedar St, Lowell St, Walnut St- Proposal to have protected bike lanes on these streets for all ages and abilities. The down side of these streets are that many have steep upsides (steep grades)
  - Comment made whether they city can provide electric bike rebates to residents and whether there will be electric bike share rentals coming soon
- Evaluation of Highland Ave corridor routes – Greg
  - Central and Highland have high traffic volumes
  - What’s needed for all ages and abilities
    - Would need PBL’s by NACTO guidelines for these traffic volumes
  - Hudson neighborways
    - Street crossings are issues, no crosswalks, poor sightlines, and need to zig zag
  - Cedar, Lowell, Central- High traffic volumes, steep grades for some streets
  - Community Path- grades steep to top of Central Hill and Spring Hill
  - Greg presented potential bicycle routes from Davis Sq to Central/Highland
  - Parking and Zoning on Highland corridor
    - Future Residential parking permit restrictions for new construction
    - Residential parking permits will be restricted in the future
    - There will be less demand for parking along Highland over time
  - Dropbox link to Greg’s slides:  
[https://www.dropbox.com/s/a0bk059whd9zn1k/alternate\\_routes.pptx?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/a0bk059whd9zn1k/alternate_routes.pptx?dl=0)

- North-south routes memo – Ted F
  - Recommendations
    - Critical
      - Central St/Sycamore St protected bikelanes
      - One way couplets on Central/Sycamore and Laurel
    - Low Hanging Fruit
      - Prescott/Quincy St mixed traffic bicycling
      - Vinyl contraflow
      - Others
- Highland Ave letter
  - Tom presented letter to the City about need for bike lanes on Highland Ave for endorsement
  - Tom agrees to add in a specific calling out curb separated bike lanes on highland.
    - Ted Feldman made motion, Ted Lester seconded for Ted Feldman’s north-south corridor memo and Highland Ave letter, incorporating specifically citing curb-separated bike lane and noting the context. Kevin seconded that motion. Unanimously approved

**Focus 4: 28/38 project**

- Review of current 28/38 plans– Tabled until next meeting

**City Update – Adam**

- Project status updates
  - Working on vision zero report card. Looking for feedback from committee.
  - Viola: Going to be adding flex posts to Broadway bridge, new crosswalks on Broadway/Boston Ave, Broadway/Winchester. New traffic signal at Tufts/Washington street
  - DCR is advancing a concept to narrow Alewife Brook Parkway to three lanes at the intersection with Powder House Boulevard. There was a round of applause for this.
  - The City is looking for any work that SBAC has done on Pearl Street.